

RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

"PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."—*Paul.*

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REV. JOHN BISBE, JR.—EDITOR.

POLEMICAL.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

CHRISTIANITY *versus* ORTHODOXY.

Mr. Editor—It is an invidious, and certainly an unthankful task, to trumpet the follies or the vices of our neighbors. But circumstances do occur, which fully justify the measure of turning the tables upon our opponent, and wounding him in a vulnerable point, by weapons of his own choice. Were our opponents sufficiently persuaded of the truth of scripture, and the power of reason in favor of their dogmas, to come out manfully in their opposition to what they denominate error, we are not in the least doubtful that the result would be precisely what their fears indicate; but they feel too forcibly the weakness of their cause, and therefore resort to slander.

That your readers may fully understand the purport of these remarks, I shall state with confidence what no man dare contradict, who values his character for veracity. In this city are two *orthodox* periodical publications, besides the Evangelist, (not so well circumstanced for controversy as the former.) Each of the two has occasionally *touched* on the editorial remarks and the communications which have originated in the Inquirer, without even deigning to notice whether they originated in the United States, or Europe. Remarks have been made in this paper, in the most direct manner, on these obscure *touches*, and the writers have remained silent as the house of death. Similar conduct is often witnessed in different forms, which merely betrays the feeble support of a cause, of which its advocates appear to be ashamed.

Did our antagonists stop here, we should permit them to remain in the state of torpid insignificance to which they are subjected by their fears—but when they are disposed to vent their maledictions, rather than to render their reasons, or honestly to renounce their ill-founded systems, it becomes our duty

—“With truth’s fair shield to ward the blow,
And turn the weapon back upon the foe;
To trace the skulking fraud, the candid cheat.”

And in doing this, we find the weapons to our hand, drawn

from their own quiver, for they stand self-condemned by their own words.

I have already noticed several instances of this sort, with accompanying remarks. The following is from a Narrative of the State of Religion within the bounds of the Synod of New-York, lately published.

“While they (the Synod,) believe that there is a time to mourn, and a time to rejoice, they are constrained to admit that the *FORMER* appears to be principally *their duty* at the present season.” “The Synod believe that it is our *sins* which have separated between us and our God, that he is chastising us for our unfaithfulness.” “The lukewarmness and worldly spirit which so generally prevail among the professed children of God throughout our bounds, the Synod believe to be the immediate cause of much of that indifference to the one thing needful, which is so unhappily prevalent among men of the world.”

“While the low state of religious feeling in our church calls for deep repentance and humiliation before God, the Synod regret to say that *very few* of our people appear to feel properly sensible of their situation and their duty.”

“The Synod are also constrained with pain to notice the great neglect to sanctify the Lord’s day, which appears to be *increasing to an alarming degree*.” “We are with grief compelled to witness parties of pleasure devoting this sacred day to purposes of amusement and *dissipation*.”

The reader will be pleased to recollect that these are not *my assertions*—they are the avowal of the highest authority in the Presbyterian church, respecting their own members. It may also be recollected, that these same people are compassing “sea and land” to make proselytes to their faith, which they allow is inefficient, and anathematizing Universalists as heaven-daring rebels, for refusing to aid in the “sacred cause of missions,” to make such christians. Well may a certain orthodox writer say, that pride is engendered by the systematic operations for proselytizing the heathen.

The following acknowledgments are from the Christian Secretary, and are well adapted as lessons for those Baptists, who consider a belief in orthodoxy as a much better mark of acceptance with God, than a good life without it.

“Were our hearts properly imbued with the spirit of the Gospel of Christ, we should give no countenance to that “covetousness which is idolatry,” and which leads the possessor to worship, and honor the creature more than the Creator; which withholds that which God requires, while it says to a distressed brother be ye warmed, be ye clothed, which characterises the regular support of the Gospel, and the charitable institutions of the present age as criminal prodigality, which says, in reference to the pious exertions and liberal contributions of the friends of Christ, to spread abroad the glad tidings of salvation, “wherefore is this waste?” Such a temper, and such language, evidences a spirit of disloyalty to our rightful king, and ill befits the professed disciples of Him who gave his *life* a ransom for sinful men.

I have said, that covetousness, which is idolatry, and dissipation of mind, are the secret springs from which the evil which we deprecate takes its rise. But it may be asked, "will a man rob God?" yea further, will the churches of the saints, redeemed by the blood of Christ, rob him in the persons of his ministers, by withholding from them that support which his word, the necessity of the case, and the reason and fitness of things require?

In view of our privileges, let us remember that "to whom much is given, of them much will be required;" and permit me to suggest the inquiry, whether in our present situation, the language of divine inspiration recorded by the apostle James, v. 4, may not with propriety be applied to our churches.

"Behold, the hire of the laborers which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."

If the above is a true representation of our situation as a community, we have reason to tremble in prospect of those judgments which the Lord assures us are suspended over our heads."

"Now it was the natural effect of the doctrine inculcated by our early fathers, on the subject under consideration, to give countenance to a spirit of covetousness in relation to the support of Gospel Institutions."

"In doing this, they no doubt claimed to be very conscientious, and, as they say, did it that they might enjoy *gospel liberty*, when in fact their sordid conduct has subsequently declared that a parsimonious spirit was the moving cause of their dissent."

"Again, that course of ministrations which was calculated to countenance a covetous spirit among our denomination, was also calculated to attract the attention and gain the approbation of such men in other religious communities, as loved their money better than they did the cause of Christ, and whose object was to get to Heaven in the cheapest manner possible, consistent with any pretensions to decency amongst their fellow men."

"Another benefit which will accrue to us is, that we shall avert the just judgments of Heaven which now seem to be gathering around us, and already begin to be felt in the shaking of our churches, and in the removal of our ministers."

In examining the above quotations it will strike the mind of every intelligent reader, that "covetousness which is idolatry," is a very prominent trait in the Baptist church, and every man of information knows it is fairly earned.—Neither is it a secret, that members of other societies have been *smuggled* into the Baptist ranks, by their holding out the very bait on which a *covetous* person would seize. A *cheap* religion, has made *cheap* professors, and the consequences are precisely such as might be expected. That, however, is their concern.

I would now ask of orthodox editors, to be true to their principles. They profess to believe that the doctrine of impartial grace, and universal holiness and happiness, is untrue. They know that this belief is gaining ground, and the ground once obtained is irrecoverable. They are aware of our constant appeal to scripture and reason, and have constant invitations to answer in our own columns, every argument which they deem untenable; under these circumstances, I ask the question, and put it to their own souls in the fear of God—Why do you not use the powers of moral suasion, and come directly to the point, at our ex-

pense? Let the bane and its antidote appear together. If it would answer no other purpose, it would prevent the same quantity of matter from appearing in our columns, which you designate heretical. But if your own publications are preferred, come out boldly and fearlessly in them, and let the trumpet give a *certain sound*. You must know that the vacillating policy which you have pursued is unworthy the christian name, and every day's occurrence proves, that if you be not the veriest hypocrites in creation, your conduct belies your faith.

Much as has been said, and much more as may be said, on the subject of immorality, as attached to orthodox churches, not a line has been written from any other motive, than the reformation of delinquents. When the cause of Christ is injured in the house of his professed friends, we consider it as a cause of regret to every one professing the christian name. If, in self-defence, we are obliged to retort the charge which is urged against the peculiar principles which we profess, we urge only the confessions of our opponents. If we cannot foil them with weapons drawn from their own quiver, their consciences are more seared than those of ordinary men.

One more request, and a rational one. When the orthodox are disposed to criminate our principles as *licentious*, let them produce as strong proof of the fact as stands out in full relief against their own churches, who profess to become virtuous in belief of their view of "the sanctions of the divine law," or for ever after hold their peace.

Words are but wind—facts are stubborn things, and light is now too far advanced for a total eclipse of truth by the gossamer-web of falsehood. Confidence in the truth of a system will give courage to maintain it with unshaken valor, and on even ground; while the skulking assailant, already betrays a want of confidence, which is a prelude to his own defeat. If we feel that our duty calls us "to contend earnestly for the faith," it is well that we put on "the whole armour of God," not by constraint, but of a ready mind. When men, professing to be watchmen on the walls of Zion, exhibit as much diligence and sincerity in contending for the *faith* which they term *essential*, as they do in maintaining a war of words respecting the mode of baptism, or the rites and forms of introduction into the christian church, then will we allow them the merit of *acting agreeable to their professions*. MENTOR.

DOCTRINAL.

FOR THE RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

UNIVERSALISM PECULIARLY CONSOLING IN CALAMITY AND BEREAVEMENT.

It has often been said of Universalists, that all their apparent peace and tranquillity are gone when affliction or death overtakes them; but is it proper to judge of a sentiment from the description its opposers give it, or from the visible effect it has on those who believe it? I have for some time theorized on the sustaining power of a sincere belief in the impartial goodness of God, but my trust in

the love of my heavenly Father has not been severely tried until this season, in which his bereaving providence has twice visited me. But I can truly say his paternal regard has never been so deeply felt as in my greatest affliction. Nor has the consoling power of my belief in Universalism been as constantly, or as rejoicingly experienced, as in my deepest distress.

I have felt with joy the truth of the declaration, that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," and "though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies."

A firm belief that the Governor of this and all worlds is actuated by a sincere desire for the felicity of all his subjects, and that he will overrule each event for their individual advantage, as he is not wanting in power to execute his every wish, is the only adequate support for man while suffering under the painful dispensations of God's love.—This can cheer and sustain in the most trying scenes of life, and while the tomb is closing over our nearest and dearest friends, we can look forward with joyful anticipation to that immortal jubilee, when "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, will be heard saying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

There is no belief within the scope of human imagination which has power to silence every murmur of the heart, and to bring each feeling of love and gratitude into exercise, like a firm and enlightened belief in the unbounded and unchanging love of God for all his offspring. When we perceive that every dispensation of his providence is designed for our good, and will certainly result in it, as God carries his every purpose into the most perfect accomplishment; when we feel the truth of the affirmation, "that his tender mercies are over all his works;" when his chosen messengers assert that "he does not afflict willingly, that no affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous, yet that nevertheless it worketh the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those that are exercised thereby," can we longer doubt his love, or distrust his care?

When we can realize that we have an immortal and unchanging Parent, whose nature is love, and who made and governs all things, and without whose observation not a sparrow falls to the ground, can our confidence be weak? His very nature is a sufficient warrant for our unlimited trust in his dispensations. He declares in his word that "love worketh no ill to his neighbor," and can a God, whose very essence is love, bestow those things on his children, which he knows will ultimate in their eternal ruin? Let us answer this question to our hearts, and live in agreement with our belief. May our highest aspiration be to prove ourselves grateful for the blessing we have received in the revelation of God's love to all his creatures, and that he designs to purify and consequently to save all his offspring.

M.

RELIGIOUS INQUIRER.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1825.

"Earnestly contend for the faith."

IMITATION OF GOD.

Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.—MAT. v. 48.

In our last, those foundation principles, on which all religion or pure morality is based, were so fully considered, that no recapitulation of the arguments can be useful to a clear understanding of all that will be advanced in this number, on the momentous topic of resembling a Being, infinitely perfect and happy, in all his imitable perfections. No individual of feeling and intelligence can have but two questions on this great theme of human improvement, which, being answered, both by scripture and experience, leave the mind and heart in a state admirably fitted for the acquisition of divine knowledge and permanent happiness. It is first asked whether man possesses a nature that will permit him to delight in the enjoyments of God, and secondly whether he possesses ability to conform to the character of God, should this conformity conduce to the expansion of his mind and the felicity of his heart. When these questions are answered in the affirmative, and the correctness of the reply evidenced by inspiration, reason and history, nothing remains for man but to advance towards the perfection of his Father in heaven, and to pray that his grace may render him victorious over all impediments, and persevering to the end of life, yes, long as rational existence shall continue. But should either of these questions receive a negative answer, should man be unable to resemble God, or should this resemblance give him pain, the divine oracles would be of no service to him, all their requirements being impracticable, or promotive of increased unhappiness. A position of such vital importance should be carefully examined by every one calling himself a christian, that he may not endeavor to improve the condition of sinners by means that are inefficient, or drive them into unbelief and greater wickedness, by assuring them that they are as incapable of yielding obedience to God, or of growing better, as the mouldering ashes of the dead, and that all the means which Heaven has employed, unless they have been converted, are as inoperative in promoting their spiritual benefit, as star-light in melting the ice of the pole. For a system that is absolutely perfect in theory, but entirely unsuited to induce practice, is no better than a pleasant dream, that presents many delightful schemes of happiness, not one of which can be carried into effect. And though people may extol the christian religion above all the polytheism, impurity and unbridled rage, which distinguish the heathen worship, they should recollect that its superiority is not discoverable, if it require impossibilities, or if its means and ends do not meet, or if it promise the holiest morality, and teach perjury, deceitfulness and malice. Having taken this preliminary

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view, and mentioned the great landmarks by which our research is to be directed, let us bring another doctrine of the church to the test, and see how it squares with the infallible standard. The second hypothesis asserts that God, from all eternity, determined to bestow salvation on those who he foresaw would persevere unto the end, and to inflict everlasting punishment on those who should continue in their unbelief, and resist his divine succor; that Jesus Christ, by his sufferings and death, made an atonement for the sins of all men in general, and of every individual in particular; that true faith cannot proceed from the exercise of our natural faculties and powers, nor from the force and operation of free will; that this divine grace, or energy of the Holy Ghost, begins and perfects every thing that can be called good in man, and, consequently, all good works are to be attributed to God alone; and that God gives to the truly faithful, who are regenerated by his grace, the means of preserving themselves in this state.— This, it is contended, is the profound plan of grace which God has devised for the salvation of all sinners from wickedness and misery; a scheme, the wisdom, power and goodness of which will challenge the admiration of men and angels through eternity. If this in truth be the system which a perfect God has formed to effect the happiness of his creatures, man is fully authorized to adopt it as the rule of his conduct, far as his means or situation will admit, that he may become perfect as his Father in heaven. As nothing can be objected to this conclusion, if God, or perfection, be more deserving of imitation than wickedness, or imperfection, let us try the consistency of the above theory by a few plain cases. A parent knows that at a certain time all his children will be hungry, thirsty and lost in an immense forest; that he shall abundantly provide for the relief of each, of all; that their disposition to accept the offered food will depend on him; that he shall not employ the energy of his love to render them all willing to receive sustenance and comfort from his hand; that he shall proffer aid and succor to them all, and that he shall inflict misery on those, who do not accept the tendered good, to the extent of their ability to suffer. With this foresight of consequences, that will depend on his resolve, and this determination concerning those, who will not accept his proffered kindness, through want of his influence, he contends that he is entirely impartial, that he made provision for all his children, that the offer was made to all, and that if any perish, it must be through their own obstinacy, not by his neglect, or determination. This, it is affirmed, is the perfect, the unimpeachable scheme of an infinitely benevolent and sincere God, deeply concerned in the happiness of our race, and heartily disposed to use every mean in his power to effect this most desirable object. His earnestness, however, is clearly seen, when he makes offers to sinners, which are not accepted, because he gives them no inclination to receive them, and thereby shows it is his intention they should perish. His impartiality is manifested in softening the hearts of some, and

gently persuading them into the love, embracement and practice of righteousness, while others are left in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, without hope, strength, or possibility of relief, because he does not afford the aid their condition requires, and without which no one can be saved. This, though a faithful portraiture of this admired plan, does not make it seem as lovely as it sometimes appears, when dressed in borrowed robes, and painted in colours not its own, it deceives the unwary, and those who have little knowledge of its true character.

That our representation of this scheme is correct, must be conceded, as it contends that true, or saving faith, that which works by love and purifies the heart, cannot proceed from the exercise of our natural faculties and powers, nor from the force and operation of free will, but is the gift of God. This being admitted, what benefit can arise from threatening sinners with all the horrors of hell, or inviting them to all the joys of heaven, as the Holy Spirit begins and perfects every thing that can be called good in man, his natural corruption disabling him from thinking or doing any good thing? till the regenerating grace of the Holy Ghost has imparted a new and virtuous disposition, this scheme asserts, that man is incapable of thinking or doing the least good thing; therefore each call to repentance must be utterly insincere, or it must be accompanied with that divine energy, which will change the wicked heart, and make it delight in the service of God. For how can a sincere invitation be given by Omnipotence, when it is clearly foreseen that it will not advantage the sinner, but sink him deeper in ruin, as he has no inclination to comply with it, in consequence of his inbred corruption, and as he who calls has determined not to change his disposition? Only grant that God is sufficiently dishonest to choose this course, and faithlessness, falsehood, perjury, and every devious and malignant show of kindness is completely justified by the injunction and example of Heaven, and the frequent and bitter complaints about the deceitfulness, animosity, treachery and dissimulation of the children of earth, merely show the depraved heart of man is violently opposed to the nature and character of a just and holy God. As he says to his creatures, be ye warmed and filled, without giving, or intending to give the garments of righteousness, or the bread of life, though his means are inexhaustible, they may follow his example, and say to the friendless children of want, be ye warmed and filled, without intending to bestow the least favor on them, because God treats man in this manner, and commands us to imitate him, to copy his perfection. What a blessed state this would be, could mankind only be persuaded to act in this spirit of duplicity, and to mock at all human suffering with the highest merriment, or the most artfully feigned pity!— What very angels they would be in the temper of their hearts, and how their conduct would restore paradise, and cause the moral desert to bloom like the garden of God!

One additional reason shall finish our examen of this doctrine. Its defenders say a time will come when each of

our race shall be judged according to his deeds, and that the righteous, those whom God has qualified to perform acts of virtue, shall be applauded, and received to eternal joy; but the wicked, those whose inborn depravity prevented their thinking or doing any good thing, and which God has never removed, shall be doomed to wretchedness in eternal fire, as the just reward of their sin. As all the plans and determinations of Jehovah were framed from everlasting, and as he is without variableness or shadow of turning, this judgment has already passed in the mind of God, and the condition of each creature is unalterably fixed for eternity. Notwithstanding this immutable resolve, it is claimed that God manifests his love for each sinner by calling them all to accept the offered salvation, and that if they should refuse the blessing, the fault would be exclusively theirs, though they possessed no ability to comply, and many of them were damned in the mind of God, at the very time the call was made, with great appearance of regard.

Bad, corrupt as mankind are, they have not yet learned to deceive, to lie with unblushing effrontery, and to practise the acts of fraud and cruelty by the authority and example of God, but only teach them this doctrine so effectually that they will carry it into all the business of life, into every public and private transaction, and you will furnish them not merely with a fair apology, but with an ample justification of all their wickedness, so that they will commit deeds of cruelty and blood, without fear or shame, in the broad light of noon. Make them practical believers in this hypothesis, and nothing would be left to encourage virtue, or preserve truth, or compassion in the earth. Each would seek his imagined advantage by every method he could devise, nor would he be deterred from any deed, however vile, should he think its performance expedient. These consequences would inevitably result from practising on this scheme, and yet people can hear it advocated with all possible warmth, and never discover its futility, or its immoral tendency. So strong is the power of habit, and so little are men disposed to investigate the doctrines that are constantly urged for their acceptance, or to ascertain their dangerous power,

How custom steals the human breast,
To deeds which nature's thoughts detest!
How custom consecrates to fame,
What reason else would give to shame?

INCREASE OF LIBERALITY IN VERMONT.

When the Rev. Mr. Bartlett, of Hartland, Vt. was chosen to deliver the election sermon before the Vermont Legislature, the orthodox papers in that and other States declaimed against the procedure, and most pathetically bewailed the moral condition of the State, whose Legislature had elected a man to preach before them, that ought not to be considered a *Christian*, because he did not belong to a denomination who had established a title to that name.— They consequently entreated the good people of Vermont to unite their exertions that the Legislature might be

purged of all those who had assisted in the election of Mr. Bartlett, that so the laws might be rightly framed, and other States preserved from this most awful example of defection from the requirements of the gospel. But the people of the State generally, and the Legislature now in session appear to have viewed this orthodox interference and dictation in a proper manner, as Mr. Bartlett is a Representative from Hartland, and Mr. J. L. Palmer, of Barre, another Universalist preacher, is chaplain of the assembly. These things are recorded to evidence the liberalizing power of genuine christianity, and to prove that any attempt to govern the public feeling and control the public voice by means employed in the time of Oliver Cromwell, can avail little in this country, while the present means of information are continued to us, and our citizens can honestly express their opinions in the choice of all the officers of government, without fear of military execution, or dread of ecclesiastical anathema, or fire. Let Universalists remember that Christ and his disciples had established no religious character in their day, according to the decision of their saintly contemporaries, because they associated with publicans and sinners, and belonged to no *pure* sect among the Jews. If the Master were called Beelzebub, a Devil, a Samaritan, a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a maniac, a subverter of government, a Sabbath-breaker, a blasphemer, and a person so unfit to live, that the multitude exclaimed, crucify him, crucify him, let us reflect that it is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. When these things are well settled in our minds, we shall in patience possess our souls, and rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer shame for the name and doctrine of Jesus.

MR. DUNCAN.

This gentleman, who has distinguished himself by preaching, and writing a book against creeds and confessions, was lately arraigned before the Presbyterian Synod in Baltimore for this high misdemeanor. We learn by the Christian Inquirer, that a member of the Presbyterian church, who was present, says "priestcraft completely tyrannised over the Bible," and that he never witnessed more disengenuousness, management and intrigue on any occasion. Dr. Green, it seems, has distinguished himself as the particular opponent of Mr. Duncan, and yet the Synod were so impartial that they chose him *moderator*, and he was so *modest* and *decent* as to accept the appointment, that he might enjoy the opportunity of sitting in judgment on his brother. The committee, authorized to inquire into Mr. D's faith, reported that he was "sound in the faith and had not deviated from the confession of the church," and therefore ought to be received into regular standing. Mr. M'Calla, a gentleman of much notoriety, replied with great zeal, that Mr. Duncan had departed from the order of the church in denouncing creeds, and therefore should be forthwith rejected. The Presbyterian, who gives this information, thinks Mr. Duncan will be rejected by the synod, and that the bitterness of the clergy against him

will be satisfied with nothing but his *excommunication*. Thus a conscientious and able preacher of the gospel is to be condemned by his fellow disciples, because he cannot discover the utility of creeds and confessions, though they acknowledge he is 'sound in the faith and has not deviated from the confession of the church.' This is a lamentable state of things, for here is Protestant infallibility in all its bald and disgusting features.

May the God of heaven support our persecuted brother, purify his heart and expand his mind by his trials, and the desertion of pretended friends, and at last make him triumph over all his misfortunes in the strength of Heaven, and the solace of an approving heart.

ORTHODOXY PICTURED TO THE LIFE.

The following extract from the *Triangle*, written by the late Rev. Mr. Whelpley, a Presbyterian clergyman, most forcibly exhibits the gross inconsistencies of modern theology, and displays their ruinous influence on the hearts and lives of those to whom they are continually preached. Indeed, what is better suited to lead men into unbelief of the scriptures, or to give them self-complacency in the midst of all their abominations, than the positive assurance that they *were* damned before their birth, by the decree of God, for the sin of Adam; that they can do nothing to better their condition, or change the face of eternity, but that every prayer they hear, every warning they receive, every sermon to which they listen will sink them lower in eternal torment, and kindle a hotter fire in their souls, long as God shall be God. The *practical utility* of the orthodox scheme has been most awfully proved in the conduct of those, who have acted on its teachings, and declared that it had

'Consign'd their unborn souls to hell,
And damn'd them from their mother's womb.'

On the other hand, how has it promoted the cause of religion, by assuring men, that if they were elected, all their crimes would be forgiven and they received to glory, though the most horrid enormities should be perpetrated by their hands, long as they have power or disposition to commit them? Did they feel strongly disposed to abandon their sins, and to join themselves to the Lord with lamentation and remorse for their past iniquities, because they were informed that they could entertain no good thought, speak no good word, nor perform any good work, till the omnipotent, unsolicited and mysterious spirit of God has instantaneously changed their souls? Let those who can feel or judge reflect on these things, and compare their observations with the opinions of the following extract.

With no design to exaggerate or colour too highly, I have, in the preceding numbers, given a sketch of the incessant strain of preaching pursued in many congregations of this city. I have not misrepresented, neither have I withheld the truth. As I said, I have no controversy with any man: and am willing to give full credit to the learning and talents of many who teach these doctrines.—Indeed, I have a charitable hope that some of them imagine they are labouring in the cause of truth. But truth will

one day instruct them that, as "they have sown the wind, they shall reap the whirlwind."

I will not undertake to say that all the vices of the city are chargeable to the account of their errors; far from it; but I will undertake to say that their doctrines are calculated, and tend, to drive men to scepticism, deism, atheism, libertinism; nay, to madness. The rash and unwary man that enters their assembly is amazed to hear his assent challenged to propositions from which his understanding revolts with horror: assertions are arrogantly, as it were, crammed down his throat, which insult his reason. He is told he can do nothing, yet threatened with endless perdition for his neglect. He is condemned for a sin he never committed; commanded to do what he is told he cannot do; and exhorted to believe in a Saviour who never died for him.

The muddiness, the confusion, the arrogance with which these sentiments are hurled forth in a storm of popular eloquence, or shall I say vociferation, precludes all possibility of conviction. One man sits and hears it with that kind of stupid amazement with which we hear a hail storm rattling upon the roof, and thunder rolling over our heads, till he is stunned into a kind of thoughtless reverie, and gathers as much from it as Cushi did from the defeat of Absalom: "I saw a great tumult, my lord, O king, but knew not what it was." Another hears it with contempt and secret indignation, and as he retires, musing says to himself, "are these the boasted principles and doctrines of religion, said to be so luminous, so simple, so rational, so intelligible, so convincing?" But these teachers will tell him, for his consolation, "No wonder you don't understand these truths, for they are evangelical truths, and you are a *natural man*; therefore you cannot understand them." Wretched subterfuge! As wise and as profound as if a man should say to me that "two and two are fifteen, and it is only because you want mathematical skill that you can't perceive it." Alas! what huge masses of flummery, falsehood, false doctrine; what immense cargoes of wood, hay, and stubble, the lumber and trash of speculation and fanaticism, are vented as evangelical truth, which the *natural man* cannot understand!

THE REV. JOHN S. THOMPSON, has issued proposals for publishing by subscription the *CHRISTIAN GUIDE to a right understanding of the sacred scriptures, designed as a brief commentary, consisting of Notes, Comments, or Dissertations on all important and obscure passages in the New-Testament*. As nothing has yet appeared in the form of a Commentary by any one of our denomination, it is hoped the proposed work may be well executed, and receive encouraging support. Should these proposals meet the approbation of the public, so far as to procure a number of subscribers adequate to defray the expense of the work, it is designed to commence the publication on the first of January, 1826, at Utica, in Monthly Nos. of 24 pages, stitched in neatly printed covers, for \$1.50 a year, payable on the delivery of the first number. From the known talents, research and diligence of Mr. Thompson, it but reasonable to expect much valuable information in his intended *Commentary on the New Testament*.

DEDICATION.

The Universalist Meeting-House, in Nantucket, was dedicated on the 3d inst. Sermon by REV. JOSHUA FLAGG, from Gen. xxviii. 17.—*Univ. Magazine*.

CAVEAT.

The Editors of the *Universalist Magazine*, having complained of the *Candid Examiner* for the commission of plagiarism, we hereby protest against them for stealing an article, headed "Genuine old Calvinism," from our paper, especially as it has been copied by the *Philadelphia Universalist*, and credited to them.

Our paper has been delayed to this time by the sickness of our printer; and not being able to procure hands to work it off in season, our subscribers were not supplied on the customary day. We hope this may be a sufficient apology, and that a similar failure may not again occur. In consequence of this delay we have changed the date of the paper, and shall begin the 5th volume on the 26th.

MISCELLANEOUS.

From the London Examiner.

MISSIONARY FRAUDS.

In several successive reports of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, mention was made of a School upon the Madras system established in a certain settlement in Newfoundland, called Twillingate, by a Mr. Leigh, a magistrate there, to whom "an adequate supply of national school-books, slates, &c. was sent for the purpose." The progress of the school was spoken of; it was said to be "well attended," and to have produced a very beneficial alteration in the conduct and manners of the inhabitants. What is the fact? *No such school ever existed at Twillingate!* If Mr. Leigh furnished the materials to the society for their report, he must have *dreamed* of the school, or written his account under the influence of opium! The Newfoundland people are ungracious enough also to be dissatisfied with the religious teachers appointed them. In 1822, two persons were taken from humble stations in the navy, to be turned into missionaries. One is Mr. Charles Blackman, who came first to the Colony in His Majesty's ship Sir Francis Drake, and who, while rated in the ship's books as an *able seaman*, was retained in the capacity of school-master, by his Excellency Sir Charles Hamilton, the Governor of Newfoundland, to instruct his son, a boy about the age of 11 or 12 years; and who, in the early part of 1822, went to England, whence in about three months he returned, clothed in the clerical character. The other is a Mr. William Bullock, who for several years served as a midshipman on the Newfoundland station, and who went to England in the winter of 1821, and returned to the Colony early in the summer of 1822, qualified by the appointment of the *venerable* society. We all know what large sums are obtained annually from the deluded people of England, to support this and other sanctified societies; but if the publication in the Reports of statements such as we have exposed, be not "obtaining money under false pretences," what is?

VANITY INSCRIBED ON ALL THINGS.

Time, like a long flowing stream, makes haste into eternity and is forever lost and swallowed up there; and while it is hastening to its period, it sweeps away all things with it which are not immortal. There is a limit appointed by Providence to the duration of all the pleasant and desirable scenes of life, to all the works of the hands of men, with all the glories and excellencies of animal nature, and all that is made of flesh and blood. Let us not doat upon any thing here below, for heaven hath inscribed vanity upon it. The moment is hastening when the decree of heaven shall be uttered, and Providence shall pronounce upon every glory of the earth, "Its time shall be no longer."

What is that stately building, that princely palace,

which now entertains and amuses our sight with ranks of marble columns, and wide spreading arches, that gay edifice which enriches our imagination with a thousand royal ornaments, and a profusion of costly and glittering furniture? Time and all its circling hours, with a swift wing are brushing it away; decay steals upon it insensibly, and a few hours hence it shall be in mouldering ruin and desolation. Unhappy possessor, if he have no better inheritance!

What are those fine and elegant gardens, those delightful walks, those gentle ascents and soft declining slopes, which raise and sink the eye by turns to a thousand vegetable pleasures? How lovely are those glowing varieties of bloom and fruit, which recal lost paradise to mind!—Those lovely parterres which regale the sense with vital fragrance, and make glad the sight by their refreshing verdure and intermingled flowery beauties! The scythe of time is passing over them all; they wither, they die away, they drop and vanish into dust, their duration is short; a few months deface all their yearly glories, and within a few years perhaps all these gentle terrace walks, these gentle verging declivities, shall lose all order and elegance and become a rugged heap of ruins: those well distinguished borders and parterres shall be levelled in confusion, and thrown into common earth again, for the ox and the ass to graze upon. Unhappy man, who possesses this agreeable spot of ground, if he have no paradise more durable than this!

And no wonder that these labours of the hands of men should perish, when even the works of God are perishable!

What are these visible heavens, those lower skies, and this globe of earth? They are indeed the glorious workmanship of the Almighty. But they are waxing old, and waiting their period too, when the angel shall pronounce upon them that time shall be no more. The heavens shall be folded up as a vesture, the elements of the lower world shall melt with a fervent heat, and the earth, and all the works thereof, shall be burnt with fire. May the unruinable world be my portion, and the heaven of heavens my inheritance, which is built for an eternal mansion for the sons of God: These buildings shall outlive time and nature, and exist through unknown ages of felicity.

JUDICIAL OATHS.

Is it not a species of impiety to introduce the name of God in our wicked disputes, solemnly invoking the Almighty Ruler of the Universe, to the attestation of an account of groceries or the contents of a bale of goods, and on many other, not only trifling, but ridiculous occasions? The administration of these oaths has become a trade, by which persons live in comfort and luxury. The practice is disgusting, its use doubtful: men of integrity speak truth without it: persons of opposite principles are restrained by the law; they fear man, not God.

The practice is a relic of the union of church and state. Governments have on all occasions availed themselves of the service of the church, and the church has rarely omitted opportunities of ingratiating itself with the state.

The mind of society is not yet ready for leaving off this political, religious contrivance, but it is probable, that some future legislature will change the system for the benefit of religion, morals and policy.

Compere.—This reverend gentleman who has recently figured so conspicuously, has been dismissed from his charge. A letter from a member of the *Georgian Association* to the editor of the *Missionary*, printed at Mount Zion, Hancock county, in this state, states that the contract entered into by that body with the Rev. Lee Compere, *Missionary in the Creek Nation*, has been dissolved by a vote of the Association, the terms of the contract leaving

each party at liberty to dissolve the engagement at any time. Of the impropriety of Mr. C's. conduct, it is stated, that little doubt existed, but some objection was made to his dismissal without a hearing.—*Savannah Georgian.*

LETTER OF JOHN LOCKE.

About two months before his death, the celebrated John Locke wrote a letter (of which the following is a copy) to Anthony Collins, and left this direction upon it : *To be delivered after my decease.*

"I know you loved me living, and will preserve my memory when I am dead.—All the use to be made of it is, that this life is a scene of vanity, which soon passes away, and affords no solid satisfaction, but in the consciousness of doing well, and in the hope of another life. This is what I can say upon experience; and what you will find to be true, when you come to make up the account. Adieu! I leave my best wishes with you. JOHN LOCKE."

UNHAPPY QUARREL.

Epiphanius relates, that Milesius and Peter, bishops of Alexandria, both confessors of the orthodox religion, and both condemned to suffer, being together in prison, upon a small difference, fell into so great a dispute, that they drew a partition between each other in the prison, and would not hold communion in the same worship of Christ, for which, notwithstanding, they both suffered.

THE LAW OF GOD.

God never imposes upon us laws, as arbitrary tests and trials of our obedience. The great design of them is, to do us good, and direct our actions to our own interest. This, if we firmly believe it, will infinitely encourage our obedience; for when I am sure God commands me nothing but what my own health, ease, or happiness requires; and that every law of his is both a necessary and sovereign prescription against the disease of my nature, and that he could not prescribe less than he has, without being defective in his care of my recovery and happiness, with what prudence and modesty can I grudge to obey him?

Dr. Scott.

A division has taken place in the British and Foreign Bible Society, on account of their publishing the Apocrypha, for the use of foreign countries. The Edinburgh Committee have withheld their remittances in consequence.

MARRIED,

In this city, on the 8th inst. by the Rev. John Bisbe, Mr. Philo H. Burnham, of East Hartford, to Miss Eliza Williams, of Willington.

In this city, on the 10th inst. by the Rev. Mr. Hawes, Mr. Jacob Russell, of Middletown, to Miss Mary Hanson.

At East-Hartford, by the Rev. Mr. Fairchild, Mr. Joseph Treat, Jr. to Miss Jane Roberts, daughter of Jonathan Roberts, Esq.

At New-Haven, on the 6th inst. Mr. William Chapman, of this city, to Miss Maria S. Lines.

DIED,

In this city, very suddenly, Mr. Aaron Colton, 2d. for many years an Inn-keeper, aged 48.

In this town, Mr. Barna Collins, aged 52.

At Berlin, Mr. George Hart, son of Jesse Hart, Esq. aged 30.

In Westmoreland, N. H. 11th inst. Hosea Ballou, youngest son of Mr. Lemuel Willis, aged 2 years and 4 months.

In Salem, (N. H.) George T. son of Rev. Wm. Bell, aged 4 years.

POETRY.



"Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord."

[SELECTED.]

THE WILDERNESS.

THERE is a wilderness, more dark
Than groves of fir on Huron's shore;
And in that cheerless region, hark!
How serpents hiss, how monsters roar!

'Tis not among th' untrodden isles
Of vast Superior's stormy lake,
Where social comfort never smiles,
Nor sun-beams pierce the tangled brake.

Nor is it in the deepest shade
Of India's tyger-haunted wood;
Nor Western forests, unsurvey'd,
Where crouching panthers lurk for blood:—

'Tis in the dark *uncultur'd soul*,
By education unrefin'd—
Where hissing malice, vices foul,
And all the hateful passions prowl—
The frightful **WILDERNESS OF MIND.**

EPITAPH on a POOR but HONEST MAN.

Stop, reader, here, and deign to look
On one without a name,
Ne'er entered in the ample book
Of fortune or of fame.

Studious of peace, he hated strife;
Meek virtues filled his breast;
His coat of arms—"a spotless life,"—
"An honest heart"—his crest.

Quarreled within was innocence;
And thus his motto ran,—
"A conscience void of all offence
Before both God and man."

And in the last great day, though pride
Now scorns his pedigree,
Thousands shall wish they'd been allied
To this great family.

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